

TO: V. J. St. Pierre, Jr., Parish President

FROM: Annie Harmon, Interim Director of River Parish Business and Career Solutions Center

SUBJECT: 2011 Annual Report

The purpose of this annual report is to summarize the accomplishments of the River Parishes Business and Career Solutions Centers (LWIA 14) in 2011. Our centers have been charged with serving our citizens and businesses through demand driven, customer focused workforce development, education and training programs in a transparent, professional and responsive manner while maintaining a team based approach in delivering excellent customer service and meeting the performance expectations placed upon ourselves and by the Louisiana Workforce Commission. We will coordinate and collaborate between various local and state agencies, school systems, businesses and industries in an effort to develop and implement a demand driven system that ties workforce development to business and industry needs.

There have been many changes to the Louisiana Workforce Commission (formerly Louisiana Department of Labor). There are no more Unemployment Offices in the State of Louisiana. All services are handled through a Call Center and another 1-800 number. It has been stated that the mission of the Louisiana Workforce Commission is short and to the point: **"We Put People To Work"**. Due to the funding shortfalls, we need to leverage other resources and other partners. We are bringing in more employers and building relationships with Economic Development Agencies and Chambers of Commerce.

The two funding streams that we are relying heavily upon are the Urban and Rural grant. This grant is being handled through our Region Partner (First Planning District). The funds can be used by people that were living in this region during Hurricane Katrina and are long term unemployed. The guidelines are very strict and must be proven to be enrolled. The second funding stream is the BP Oil Grant. The guidelines for this grant is proving that you were affected by the Oil Spill, either by losing employment or a decrease in self sufficiency since the oil spill. Both grants are Federal dollars and must be used in accordance with specific guidelines.

Traffic has been steady and strong and staff has been delivering all services without any interruption. Total of clients served in 2011 is 17,259 individuals.

Other services delivered in 2011 are as follows:

Members enrolled:	2,046
Members obtaining a job	167
Services to Employers	12,753
UI Claimants registered in Centers	879
In House Recruitments	503

The State of Louisiana is still experiencing a major "skills gap", current training and/or education of citizens do not meet the requirements of available job. Therefore, finding qualified employees is a chief barrier for business growth for companies in the state and parishes. The result is that businesses cannot find the qualified employees they need to grow, and there are fewer opportunities for lateral growth, which has lead to hundreds of youth seeking better opportunities in other states. We have then sought out a partnership with the South Central Louisiana Technical College, River Parishes Campus, we have responded to business layoffs with Customized Recruiting Events and have set up collaborations between the three parish School Board and the three GED centers.

As reported in the Annual Report of 2010, we were very successful in our performances as dictated by the Louisiana Workforce Commission. But we also reported on our financial woes that forced a reduction in staff, the consolidation of the Administrative and Program offices in St. Charles Parish and the closing of the East Bank office in Lusher to move to the West Bank of Vacherie. These obstacles continue to plague our centers. Our staff is working hard to keep up with the demands of the unemployed and the under employed. Our training dollars are very limited and are mainly being used to continue supporting the participants already enrolled in school and training.

In 2011, all Workforce Investment Boards had to produce Recertification documents. We in essence had to get renewed commitments from our members, which was completed satisfactorily.